



News Release

Arizona Department of Public Safety

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State of Arizona Law Enforcement Agencies Seize Over A Million Dollars and a Commercial Vehicle

On Monday, June 18, 2007, several State of Arizona law enforcement agencies, consisting of the Plant Services Division of the Department of Agriculture (ADA), Motor Vehicle Division of the Department of Transportation (MVD) and the Highway Patrol Division of the Department of Public Safety (DPS), seized \$1,011,630.00 in cash and a commercial truck-tractor and box trailer as a result of a traffic stop on Interstate 40 at the Sanders Point of Entry inspection station.

At around 0645 hours, a commercial truck unit, pulled into Sanders Point of Entry on Interstate 40 westbound, near milepost 340. The truck was hauling produce which required an inspection by the Arizona Department of Agriculture. There were a total of three occupants located in the tractor, a driver and two passengers.

Inspectors from the Plant Services Division of ADA, conducted a thorough inspection of the load which was a mixture of produce consisting of watermelons and onions along with the paperwork accompanying the load. The ADA Inspectors identified several indicators that led them to be suspicious of the shipment such as why the produce load was rotting, in addition to receiving inconsistent stories about the origin and destination of the load. Additionally, the ADA

Inspectors observed the trailer to be carrying a brand new spare tire secured with an unusually large padlock. As a result, Officers with the Enforcement Section of the Motor Vehicle Division, conducted an interview of the driver, his required commercial documents and performed a full inspection of the commercial vehicle, which revealed the insurance was expired and placed the driver and vehicle out of service.

The assistance of DPS was requested and upon their arrival conducted their inspection of the truck, trailer and interview of the driver and passengers. \$10,000 in cash was located within the passenger section of the tractor. Due to the information provided by the inspection conducted by the ADA Inspectors, the DPS Officers decided to examine the spare tire closely, which was found to be considerably heavier than a normal truck spare tire. With the assistance of a local area towing company, the spare tire was removed and the rubber was removed from the wheel. During this process, the contents of the spare tire were revealed, which was not air, but \$1,011,630.00 in U.S. Currency.

The three occupants were taken into custody, interviewed further and later released as the investigation will determine if there are going to be any formal charges against any or all three of the vehicle occupants. The truck-tractor and box trailer unit, owned by JCLL Trucking out of Kansas, was identified as a 1997 Peterbilt and 1994 Box Trailer, were seized and the produce load will be removed and submitted for destruction because of the deteriorating condition caused by the rotting. The tractor and trailer unit were seized along with the U.S. Currency. The investigation is ongoing.

It is believed from the initial stages of the investigation that the large amount of currency resulted from proceeds from an illegally conducted enterprise and the shipment was headed back to the criminal organization. The skills demonstrated by the various Arizona State law enforcement personnel, which resulted in uncovering this shipment of cash derived from illegal means, demonstrates the cooperative commitment of all state law enforcement agencies to address the problems of organized crime and to provide for a safer Arizona.



